

## **MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY** **COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES**

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, August 17, 2005, at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 140, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Neal called the meeting to order at 1:18 p.m. Introductions of Commissioners, Staff and audience members followed.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JULY 20, 2005**

On motion of Commissioner Siegel, seconded by Commissioner Weller, and unanimously carried, the minutes for the July 20, 2005 meeting were approved.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Teddie Joy Remhild reported that Shelly Lyons Verander is serving as interim Executive Director of Access Services, which is deliberating how to select someone permanent. Remhild announced that the Board of Directors of Access Services has three new members: LADOT Director John Fong as Chair of the Board, Doran Barnes of Foothill Transit, and Jano Bogderian. Additional appointments included Dolores Nason as Vice Chair, Teddy Remhild as Secretary, and Jan Hyde as Treasurer. Remhild also announced that Access Services established two subcommittees, including the Board's first Audit Commission, in which she will serve alongside John Fong and an appointee from the Finances of Transportation Organization. Remhild reported that the Board of Directors will hold a retreat in late October, and that the Community Advisory Committee will hold a retreat in September, where they will discuss restructuring the committee into Regional Advisory Committees. Remhild also reported that MTA has cut back Night Owl service and initiated "restricted access" paratransit.

Guest Linda Block announced that the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) passed Congress by a margin of two, and was signed into law by Bush. Block voiced suspicions of bribery and fraud in Congress, where one opposing member was absent from the vote for her son's Boyscout Jamboree, while another has stated his vote registered erroneously in favor of the bill. Block claimed CAFTA will lower wages for access drivers and exacerbate their already-

declining morale. Block believes CAFTA will override Schwarzenegger's decision not to lower the salaries of in-home supportive service providers, and will lead to the scheduling of vitamins as prescription drugs not covered under MediCal.

Guest Carlton Lindo of the Department of Consumer Affairs pointed out a *Los Angeles Times* article on a successful wheelchair washing event. Vice Chair Rubenstein mentioned that he was quoted in the article, which featured a photo of Mayor Villaraigosa washing his wheelchair.

Chair Neal welcomed Commissioner Welt back from maternity leave.

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chair Neal reported that abuse of handicapped parking is common in unincorporated areas of the County, whose lack of a uniform enforcement program results in loss of potential revenue. She will speak with Mr. Jim Price of the DOT about establishing a county-wide task force in unincorporated areas, and about channeling a portion of the revenue back into the Commission for the Tainter Scholarship fund and new community service projects. The Chair asked the commission to consider establishing a toll-free phone number for reporting violations, and to also consider washing automobiles in the upcoming wheelchair wash, as many disabled people other than wheelchair users require lift systems on their vehicles. In addition, Chair Neal suggested the county take steps to ensure elevators are also wheelchair accessible. Commissioner Welt moved that the commission make plans for a wheelchair and van washing event in early 2006. Commissioner Krzyzanowski seconded.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Staff member Jim Corbett reported that Commissioner Resendez, founder of Familia Unida, faxed in her resignation from the commission due to an increase in her personal and professional demands.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Public Relations**

Commissioner Krzyzanowski announced he will be vacationing out of the country during the retreat. He reported that he attended a town hall meeting near USC that addressed linguistic and cultural barriers to service delivery. He will also attend a meeting on service delivery put on in Long Beach by L.A. Care. Commissioner Krzyzanowski requested the commission consider candidates to

fill the seat just vacated by Commissioner Resendez, and someone to translate the commission brochure into Spanish, and eventually into all nine of the County's threshold languages. In addition, he recommends the commission send publicity photographs of the newly-elected commissioners to *The County Digest*, and that the commission have a banner made to fly at public events.

### **Access Awards Luncheon**

Commissioner Rubenstein reported that nine people attended the Access Awards Luncheon Committee meeting, and that the committee has contracted the Grand Hall of the Music Center for the luncheon on Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. The committee is considering admitting vendors to table the luncheon at \$250 per organization. Chair Neal mentioned that an episode of *CSI New York* featured a character with his particular disabilities, which he hopes will encourage them to give when he asks for a contribution.

### **Tainter Scholarship Program**

Chair Neal recommended the Tainter Scholarship Program initiate informal mentoring with recipients to provide additional social support and positive reinforcement. Commissioner Weller agreed to head efforts to follow up. Chair Neal recommended mentoring commissioners follow up with recipients in their district every three months and prior to midterm and final exams.

### **Transportation Committee**

Guest Larry Elbers of Handy Plate, Inc. presented his design for a handicap parking placard that uses a code-activated flashing LED to deter theft and laser printer counterfeiting, and also to inform police that a disabled person is active nearby. If stolen, its LED automatically shuts off after eight hours, rendering it useless to anyone without the activation code. Elbers estimated cost to the customer at around \$10. Guest Linda Block expressed concern that the placard design would eventually integrate Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) transponder chips, which can be used to track placard location, in effect constituting an invasion of privacy. Guest John Mavis suggested, and Larry Elbers agreed, that the placard should include an audio device for the blind.

### **Health Committee**

Update on Rancho Los Amigos Hospital and Martin Luther King Hospital were continued to the November 16, 2005 meeting.

## **ITEMS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA TO BE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

None

## **ANOUNCEMENTS**

- Commissioner Neal encouraged people to listen to her radio show from Wednesdays from 9:30 – 10:00 a.m. on AM1460.
- Guest John Mavis remarked that the Braille agenda distributed by the commission is not aligned properly in the Braille embosser, so that the last line of each page cuts off illegibly.
- Mavis also recommends printing in shorthand Braille to halve paper costs.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Present**

Janet Neal, Vice Chair  
Harley Rubenstein, Vice Chair  
Richard Krzyzanowski  
Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr.  
Carlton L. Russell  
Bernard Siegel  
John B. Troost  
Wendy Welt  
Sheila D. Wright

### **Board of Supervisors**

Dedie Ward  
Audra Galang

### **Department Liaisons**

Karla Geller

### **Absent**

Ruth Ann Acosta  
Viola Vivian Corbett  
Michael G. Gureckas  
Stephen Jensen  
Irma Resendez  
Kecia Weller

### **Guests**

Ralph Gottlieb  
John Whitbread  
Vernon Hemmingway  
Linda Block  
Jess Segovia  
Cheryl Matlock  
Donald Brandon  
Carl Swirkal

